"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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UNFADING FLOWERS.

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THIRTY years ago, a small, bare-footed boy paused to admire the flowers in a well-cultivated garden. The child was an orphan, and had already felt how hard was the orphan's lot. The owner of the garden, who was trimming a border, noticed the lad, and spoke to him kindly.

"Do you love flowers?" said he.

The boy replied, "Oh, yes. We used to have beautiful flowers in our garden."

The man laid down his knife, and gathering a few flowers, took them to the fence, through the panels of which the boy was looking, and handing them to him, said as he did so,

"Here's a nice little bunch for you."

A flush went over the child's face as he took the flowers. He did not make any reply, but in his large eyes, as he lifted them to the face of the man, was an expression of thankfulness to be read as plainly as words in a book.

The act, on the part of the man, was one of spontaneous kindness, and scarcely thought of again; but, by the child, it was never forgotten.

Years went by, and through toil, privation and suffering, both in body and mind, the boy grew up to manhood. From ordeals like this, come forth our most effective men. If kept free from vicious associates, the lad of feeling and mental activity becomes ambitious, and rises in society above the common level. So it proved in the case of this orphan boy. He had few advantages of education, but such as offered were well improved. It happened that his lot was cast in a printing-office; and the young compositor soon became interested in his work. He did not set the types as a mere mechanic, but went beyond the duties of his calling, entering into the ideas to which he was giving verbal expression, and making them his own. At twenty-one he was a young man of more than ordinary intelligence and force of character. At thirty-five he was the conductor of a widely-circulated and profitable newspaper, and as a man respected and esteemed by all who knew him.

During the earnest struggle that all men enter into who are ambitious to rise in the world, the thoughts do not often go back and rest meditatively upon the earlier time of life. But after success has crowned each well-directed effort, and the gaining of a desired position no longer remains a subject of doubt, the mind often brings up from the far-off past most vivid recollections of incidents and impressions that were painful or pleasurable at the time, and which are now seen to have had an influence, more or less decided, upon the whole after life. In this state of reflection sat one day the man we have here introduced. After musing for a long time, deeply abstracted, he took up his pen and wrote hastily; and these were the sentences he traced upon the paper that lay before him:

"How indelibly does a little act of kindness, performed at the right moment, impress itself upon the mind! We meet, as we pass through the world, so much of rude selfishness, that we guard ourselves against it, and scarcely feel its effects. But spontaneous kindness comes so rarely, that we are surprised when it appears, and delighted and refreshed as by the perfume of flowers in the dreary winter. When we were a small boy, an orphan, and with the memory of home for ever lost too vivid in our young heart, a man, into whose beautiful garden we stood looking, pulled a few flowers, and

handed them through the fence, speaking a kind word as he did so. He did not know, and perhaps never will know, how deeply we were touched by his act. From a little boy we loved the flowers, and ere that heaviest affliction a child ever knows —the loss of parents—fell upon us, we almost lived among them. But death separated between us and all those tender associations and affections that, to the hearts of children, are like dew to the tender grass. We entered the dwelling of a stranger, and were treated thenceforth as if we had, or ought to have, no feelings, no hopes, no weaknesses. The harsh command came daily and almost hourly to our ears; and not even for work well done, or faithful service, were we cheered by words of commendation.

"One day—we were not more than eleven years old—something turned our thoughts back upon the earlier and happier time, when we had a true home, and were loved and cared for. We were once more in the garden and among the sweet blossoms, as of old, and the mother, on whose bosom we had slept, sat under the grape arbour, while we filled her lap with flowers. There was a smile of love on her dear face, and her lips were parting with some word of affection, when, to scatter into nothing these dear images of the lonely boy, came the sharp command of a master, and in obedience we started forth to perform some needed service. Our way was by the garden of which we have spoken; and it was on this occasion, and while the suddenly dissipated image of our mother among the flowers was re-forming itself in our young imagination, that the incident to which we have alluded occurred. We can never forget the grateful perfume of those flowers, nor the strength and comfort which the kind words and manner of the giver imparted to our fainting spirit. We took them home, and kept them fresh as long as water would preserve their life and beauty; and when they faded, and the leaves fell, pale and withered, upon the ground, we grieved for their loss as if a real friend had been taken away.

"It is a long, long time since that incident occurred; but the flowers which there sprung up in our bosom are fresh and beautiful still. They have neither faded nor withered—they cannot, for they are unfading flowers. We never looked upon the man who gave them to us that our heart did not grow warm toward him. We know not now whether he be living or dead. Twenty years ago we lost sight of him; but, if still among the dwellers of earth, and in need of a friend, we would divide with him our last morsel."

An old man, with hair whitened by the snows of many winters, was sitting in a room that was poorly supplied with furniture, his head bowed down, and gaze cast dreamily upon the floor. A pale young girl came in while he thus sat musing. Lifting his eyes to her face, he said, while he tried to look cheerful,

"Ellen, dear, you must not go out to-day."

"I feel a great deal better, grandpa," returned the girl, forcing a smile. "I am able to go to work again."

"No, child, you are not," said the old man, firmly; "and you must not think of such a thing."

"Don't be so positive, grandpa." And as she uttered this little sentence, in half-playful voice, she laid her hand among the thin gray locks on the old man's head, and smoothed them caressingly. "You know that I must not be idle."

"Wait, child, until your strength returns."

"Our wants will not wait, grandpa." As the girl said this, her face became sober. The old man's eyes again fell to the floor, and a heavy sigh came forth from his bosom.

"I will be very careful and not overwork myself again," resumed Ellen, after a pause.

"You must not go to-day," said the old man, arousing himself. "It is murder. Wait at least until to-morrow. You will be stronger then."

"If I do not go back to-day, I may lose my place. You know I have been home for three days."

"You were sick."

"Work will not wait. The last time I was kept away by sickness, a customer was disappointed; and there was a good deal of trouble about it."

Another sigh came heavily from the old man's heart.

"I will go," said the girl. "Perhaps they will let me off for a day longer. If so, I will come back. But I must not lose the place."

No further resistance was made by the old man. In a little while he was alone. Hours went by, but Ellen did not return. She had gone to work. Her employer would not let her go away, feeble as she was, without a forfeiture of her place.

About mid-day, finding that Ellen did not come back, the old man, after taking some food, went out. The pressure of seventy years was upon him, and his steps were slow and carefully taken.

"I must get something to do. I can work still," he muttered to himself, as he moved along the streets. "The dear child is killing herself, and all for me."

But what could he do? Who wanted the services of an old man like him, whose mind had lost its clearness, whose step faltered, and whose hand was no longer steady? In vain he made application for employment. Younger and more vigorous men filled all the places, and he was pushed aside. Discouraged and drooping in spirit, he went back to his home, and there awaited the fall of the evening, which was to bring the return of the only being left on earth to love him. At night-fall Ellen came in. Her face, so pale in the morning, was now slightly flushed; and her eyes were brighter than when she went out. The grandfather was not deceived by this; he knew it as the sign of disease. He took her hand—it was hot; and when he bent to kiss her gentle lips, he found them burning with fever.

"Ellen, my child, why did you go to work to-day? I knew it would make you sick," the old man said, in a voice of anguish.

Ellen tried to smile, and to appear not so very ill; but nature was too much oppressed.

"I brought home some work, and will not go out to-morrow," she remarked. "I think the walk fatigued me more than anything else. I will feel better in the morning, after a good night's sleep."

But the girl's hope failed in this. The morning found her so weak that she could not rise from bed; and when her grandfather came into her room to learn how she had passed the night, he found her weeping on her pillow. She had endeavoured to get up, but her head, which was aching terribly, grew dizzy, and she fell back under a despairing consciousness that her strength was gone.

The day passed, but Ellen did not grow better. The fever still kept her body prostrate. Once or twice, when her grandfather was out of the room, she took the work she had brought home, and tried to do some of it while sitting up in bed. But ere a minute had passed, she became faint, while all grew dark around her. She was no better when night came. If her mind could have rested—if she had been free from anxious and distressing thoughts, nature would have had some power to re-act, but as it was the pressure upon her was too great. She could not forget that they had scarcely so much money as a shilling left, and that her old grandfather was too feeble to work. Upon her rested all the burden of their support, and she was now helpless.

On the next morning Ellen was better. She could sit up without feeling dizzy, though her head still ached, and the fever had only slightly abated. But the old man would not permit her to leave the bed, though she begged him earnestly to let her do so.

The bundle of work that Ellen had brought home was wrapped in a newspaper, and this her grandfather took up to read some time during the day.

"This is Mr. T——'s newspaper," said he, as he opened it and saw the title. "I knew T—— when he was a poor little orphan boy. But of course he don't remember me. He's prospered wonderfully."

And then his eyes went along the paper, and he read aloud to Ellen such things as he thought would interest her. Among others was a reminiscence by the editor—the same that we have just given. The old man's voice faltered as he read. The little incident, so feelingly described, had long since been hidden in his memory under the gathering dust of time. But now the dust was swept away, and he saw his own beautiful garden. He was in it and among the flowers; and wishfully looking through the fence stood the orphan boy. He remembered having

felt pity for him, and he remembered now as distinctly as if it were but yesterday, though thirty years had intervened, the light that went over the child's face as he handed him a few flowers that were to fade and wither in a day.

Yes, the old man's voice faltered while he read; and when he came to the last sentence, the paper dropped upon the floor, and clasping his hands together, he lifted his dim eyes upward, while his lips moved in whispered words of thankfulness.

"What ails you, grandpa?" asked Ellen, in surprise. But the old man did not seem to hear her voice.

"Dear grandpa," repeated the girl, "why do you look so strangely?" She had risen in bed, and was bending toward him.

"Ellen, child," said the old man, a light breaking over his countenance, as though a sunbeam had suddenly come into the room, "it was your old grandfather who gave the flowers to that poor little boy. Did you hear what he said?—he would divide his last morsel."

The old man moved about the room with his unsteady steps, talking in a wandering way, so overjoyed at the prospect of relief for his child, that he was nearly beside himself. But there yet lingered some embers of pride in his heart; and from these the ashes were blown away and they became bright and glowing. The thought of asking a favour as a return for that little act, which was to him, at the time, a pleasure, came with a feeling of reluctance. But when he looked at the pale young girl who lay with her eyes closed and her face half buried in the pillow, he murmured to himself, "It is for you—for you!" And taking up his staff, he went tottering forth into the open air.

The editor was sitting in his office, writing, when he heard the door open, and turning, he saw before him an old man with bent form and snowy head. Something in the visitor's countenance struck him as familiar; but he did not recognize him as one whom he had seen before.

"Is Mr. T—— in?" inquired the old man.

"My name is T——," replied the editor.

"You?" There was a slight expression of surprise in the old man's voice.

"Yes, I am T——, my friend," was kindly said. "Can I do anything for you? Take this chair."

The offered seat was accepted; and as the old man sunk into it, his countenance and manner betrayed his emotion.

"I have come," said he, and his voice was unsteady, "to do what I could not do for myself alone. But I cannot see my poor, sick grandchild wear out and die under the weight of burdens that are too heavy to be borne. For her sake I have conquered my own pride."

There was a pause.

"Go on," said T——, who was looking at the old man earnestly, and endeavouring to fix his identity in his mind.

"You don't know me?"

"Your face is not entirely strange," said T——. "It must have been a long time since we met."

"Long? Oh yes! It is a long, long time. You were a boy, and I unbent by age."

"Markland!" exclaimed T——, with sudden energy, springing to his feet as the truth flashed upon him. "Say—is it so?"

"My name is Markland."

"And do we meet again thus?" said T——, with emotion, as he grasped the old man's hand. "Ah, sir, I have never forgotten you! When a sad-hearted boy, you spoke to me kindly, and the words comforted me when I had no other comfort. The bunch of flowers you gave me—you remember it, no doubt—are still fresh in my heart. Not a leaf has faded. They are as bright and green and full of perfume as when I first hid them there; and there they will bloom for ever—the unfading flowers of gratitude. I am glad you have come, though grieved that your declining years are made heavier by misfortune. Heaven has smiled on my efforts in the world. I have enough, and to spare."

"I have not come for charity," returned Markland. "I have hands, and they would not be idle, though it is not much that they can accomplish."

"Be not troubled on that account, my friend," was kindly answered. "I will find something for you to do. But first tell me all about yourself."

Thus encouraged, the old man told his story. It was the common history of loss of property and friends, and the approach of want with declining years. T—— saw that pride and native independence were still strong in Markland's bosom, feeble as he was, and really unable to enter upon any serious employment; and his first impulse was to save his feelings at the same time that he extended to him entire and permanent relief. This he found no difficulty in doing, and the old man was soon after placed in a situation where but little application was necessary, while the income was all-sufficient for the comfortable support of himself and grandchild.

The flowers offered with a purely humane feeling, proved to be fadeless flowers; and their beauty and perfume came back to the senses of the giver when all other flowers were dead or dying on his dark and dreary way.

A LAY SERMON.

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."—MATTHEW v. 23, 24.

WHEN the orthodox party would defend their dogma of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, they are accustomed, for one thing, to fall back upon the undeniable historic fact of the wide prevalence of the rite and usage of sacrifice in the ancient world. They tell us that therein was a sort of boding and forecast of the one great sacrifice which in the fulness of time was accomplished on Calvary. But we may take, I think, two or three exceptions to this idea. First, sacrifice does not necessarily mean a *blood*-offering. Secondly, it does not necessarily mean a sacrifice for sin. Thirdly, even as a sacrifice for sin it does not necessarily mean a vicarious one. And fourthly, the rudimentary idea of sacrifice is of the most simple and natural kind. Now the words of the text afford us, I think, a clue to this idea. Sacrifice is simply the laying a gift upon the altar of God. It is the taking the best things we have and dedicating them to God's service. The earliest recorded sacrifice, that of Cain and Abel, was purely of this kind. Abel takes the firstlings of his flock; Cain the first fruits of the ground. It was simply an act of homage, of worship, of gratitude. I say, the simple idea conveyed in the act of sacrifice is the taking the best things we have and dedicating them to God's service. In its largest sense it is the offering, as Paul has it, of our whole natures, a living, daily sacrifice. In its more limited sense, as in the example of the text, it is the offering some precious or beautiful outward thing. But in both cases it is a *personal* act, done for ourselves, although its virtue may reach others; done in some cases for others, but never losing its identity as a personal act, or having the effect of excusing others from the same duty for themselves. Now such an idea of sacrifice—and there can be no doubt that it was the earliest, the primitive one—is simple, reasonable, human; and it is the perversion of it, the making it stand for some great overshadowing blood and sin-offering, the coupling it with corruptions which grew up in the lapse of ages,—it is this perversion of it that has brought the name into its present disrepute.

The text brings into view a practice common amongst the Jews of taking some valuable or beautiful thing and laying it as a gift upon the altar of the temple. The same practice prevails in Roman Catholic countries at the present day. In such countries, you may at times see the altar or holy shrine overlaid with costly gifts or votive offerings. And we are not so besotted, I should hope, with anti-popish prejudices, as not to see that there may be a great deal of beautiful meaning in such spectacles. For just as, when a dearly-beloved friend visits us, we spare neither pains nor expense to give him a welcome,—just as we cast about, so to speak, in absolute bewilderment for some suitable method of testifying our delight, and the very best we can do seems all too mean for the joyful occasion,—so it is easy to conceive that, in many cases, it is hearts in like manner touched and melted under a sense of God's goodness, which have brought these gifts and laid them in the holy place. It may, or may not be, a wise way, but it is at least *their* way of disburdening themselves of their debt of gratitude to God, and of expressing their

peace and joy in Him. So, I say, these gifts thus interpreted make a beautiful, a touching sight; and the practice, if it could only be guarded from abuse, might be even worthy our imitation. Meanwhile, let it suggest this thought to us, of the rapt joy which some hearts at least feel in the contemplation of the God of heaven. For many of us, I fear, the great, beneficent Ruler of all things is a mere cold abstraction, and it is but seldom that our natures are moved to their deepest depths in contemplating His perfections; but for some hearts He is the *only* reality, the object of infinite affection and desire; and the highest fervours of spirit we experience towards our friends are poor and mean compared with what they feel towards Him who is the common Friend and Father of us all.

The gifts here spoken of consisted of money, or jewels, or flowers, or some other costly or beautiful thing; and all this was quite natural, and the heart was only following out its own law in seeking to express its deep affections and emotions by some outward sign. But yet, at the best, these are but partial and limited offerings. They shew very plainly the bent of the soul at the time of making these offerings, but they do not shew the pervading bent—the bent at *all* times. St. Paul, speaking upon this subject, calls upon us to present our whole natures, both body and soul, as only our reasonable service. And is *not* this large and comprehensive offering our reasonable service? And here I am not going to make use of those hacknied, although true, representations of God's claims upon us which, I fear, have in some measure lost their effect. I will not speak of Him as our Creator, Preserver, Protector, and, best of all, our Father. I will not say that at some moments of our lives, every consideration we can form, and every feeling we can indulge, only serve to establish His claims upon our reverence, love and obedience. I will not say that at certain crises of our lives, the only treasure we value, and the only satisfaction it is possible to feel, consists in the recollection that we have in some measure responded to His claims to love and serve Him. But this I will say—this tremendous fact I must bring before you—He is the very soul of the universe, the only mighty spring of all its movements; and unless we are willing to entrust our destiny, which *may* be an eternal one, to a mere chance,—more properly speaking, a desperate venture and frightful hazard,—then every consideration of prudence, to say nothing more, must lead us solemnly to ask ourselves who this great Being is, and, if He *has* claims upon us, to give prompt and earnest heed thereto. He claims, at the very least, this offering at our hands—reverence and serious consideration; and it is worse than madness to thrust so plain a duty aside.

I proceed to say that the text, taking up or rather anticipating Paul's idea upon the subject, sets before us one prime condition of true service—of an acceptable offering. It must be *whole*-hearted. Jesus here, as it were, sets before us a picture of a man coming and laying his gift upon the holy altar. And it may be remarked that he does not, as we should perhaps do, denounce the act as a folly and superstition. No; for none more than he could appreciate, or at least make allowance for, a man seeking in this way to express his inward gratitude and joy. He who looked with complacency—yea, infinite admiration—upon the woman who broke an alabaster box of precious ointment to anoint his feet, was very unlikely to visit with his displeasure such an act as this. But yet he discerned a something that was wanting in the act. The man had not first gone and made his peace with an offended brother-man. It might have been a real injury he had received from him, or—for, alas! we do not always make this distinction—it might only have been an imaginary one; but, however this might be, he cherished rancorous and bitter feelings towards him, and this made a fatal flaw in the act and hindered its acceptableness in God's sight. "Go," says Jesus, "make up with thy brother, purge thy heart of its evil feelings, and then come and present thy gift." Yes; there was half-heartedness there. The man was willing enough to serve God if he might only serve his baser passions at the same time. He was for the easier paths of virtue, not for the harder and rougher. He was for virtue when it suited him, not when it did not suit

him. He could renounce his smaller sins without great difficulty, but not his darling, his besetting sin. He could cheerfully make the smaller sacrifices for God, but not the greater ones. But then this was the very thing which took away all value from the gift. He had a sense of duty, but he lacked firmness under sore temptation, or lacked a sense of duty in reference to all duty,—lacked a sense of it as comprehending the whole wide circle of duty, not as limited to detached points of it,—lacked, in one word, the fundamental principle of duty which consists in the supreme love of it *as* duty. "Therefore," says Jesus, "thy gift is vain; it is but the show of service, not its substance; for the full, undivided, whole heart is wanting in it. There is, indeed, one eye towards God, but the other is turned towards thyself and an evil heart. Go, make up with thy brother, and then come and present thy gift."

Now the non-acceptableness of our offerings to God when we keep back anything that is properly His, is no matter of mere conjecture. We *know* they are not acceptable. When we take one part of our nature and keep back another part, one part of our time and keep back another part, we know only too well that by so doing we are sapping every sweet satisfaction in life and all sense of God's favour. Better infinitely for our inward peace that we withheld all, than gave only a part. There are some liquids which will not mix, do what we may, and holiness and sin are of this class. One evil passion permitted to lurk near our heart's core is enough to sour our whole cup of life, however much we may try to sweeten it from other sources. It is not as if a compromise was even possible here; there is no striking a balance between our good dispositions and our bad ones; there is no holding up one hand to God and holding out another to sin, for it is written alike legibly in the law of God and upon our own inward consciousness, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." And how often we have found this! We come to the house of God, and enter, it may be, heart and soul into its sacred engagements; but are we happy in such engagements? do we feel as if the blessing of God rested upon us in them? Truly, we do not; for we are haunted by stinging memories of duties imperfectly performed, or altogether neglected; and all the time perhaps we are still cherishing in our hearts some unholy passion or purpose. Let us seek, then, to take to God a full, whole, undivided, heart. Let us take to Him all we are and all we have; the freshness of our youth, the strength of our manhood, the ripeness of our old age. Let our love of Him be the supreme love of good in all its branches. In all we do let us seek to please Him; and although our offerings shall still be imperfect, yet God, seeing our *sincerity*, will accept the gift, and in like manner accept and bless the giver.

I cannot conclude without a glance at the high value which Jesus here, as well as elsewhere, sets upon a loving, kindly, gracious disposition towards our fellow-men. In his own beautiful prayer, he makes our very hope of heaven depend upon our *forgiveness* of our fellow-men. "Forgive us our trespasses," he says, "as we forgive them which trespass against us." Here he offers a kindred view of the same disposition. "What are your feelings towards your fellow-creatures?" he seems to ask. "Have you a kind look for them, a kind word for them, kindly and generous thoughts about them? Does your heart go out in a full, broad stream of sympathy towards them, rejoicing when they rejoice, sorrowing when they sorrow? Most of all, do you bear with them when they have injured you, burying their offences in oblivion, and suffering no resentful, bitter feeling to dwell in your heart towards them?" For that, Jesus intimates, is the only real test of rightness before God. So, then, it is not cold, routine morality,—it is not many and long prayers,—it is not frequenting God's house if haply to find Him there,—it is not attendance at the altar with holy gifts,—such things are not the last final tests of true piety, but this, the spirit of true brotherly love towards your fellow-man. For, let me say, man is the highest representative of God upon earth, and the highest conception of God we can form is only man indefinitely raised; and "if we love not man whom we have seen and do constantly see, how can we love

God whom we have not seen?" Yes; it is from human sources that we must seek to replenish the divine flame, which will then again return to bless the sources by which it has been fed. I call upon you, then, to doubt your acceptance with God, and to doubt the acceptance of your purest offerings, unless you can trace in your hearts full, free, overflowing, boundless love to your fellow-creatures. Go, make up with thy brother; for coldness towards him, substitute the warmth of affection and of a lively interest; for harshness, substitute gentleness and forbearance; for rancour and malice, substitute sweet pity and forgiveness, such as thou wilt thyself one day need from thy Master and his. Go, make up with thy brother, and *then* come and present thy prayers, thy praises and thy offerings; so shall the flame rise to heaven a sweet-smelling and acceptable sacrifice.

Halifax. J. S.

GOD'S GRACIOUS DESIGN.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the Methodist commentator, remarks as follows on Ephesians iii. 10: "God's gracious design to save a lost world, by Jesus Christ, could not be defeated by any cunning skill or malice of man or devils; whatever hindrances are thrown in the way, His wisdom and power can remove; and His infinite wisdom can never want *ways* or *means* to effect its gracious designs."

This looks to us very much like the way Universalists talk. We do not see how Dr. Clarke could believe in endless punishment, and believe also that God's gracious design to save a lost world could not possibly be defeated by men or devils. This argument, put in the form of a syllogism, would stand thus:

1. God's gracious design is to save a lost world, through Jesus Christ.

2. His design cannot be defeated by men or devils.

3. Therefore, the lost world will be saved.

Or put it in another form:

1. God's gracious design is to save the world.

2. His infinite wisdom can never want *ways* or *means* to effect His designs.

3. Therefore, He will save the lost world.

If it is God's gracious design to save a world, as we have no doubt, and as Dr. Clarke here admits; and if His wisdom and power can remove whatever hindrances are thrown in the way; why will not God's gracious design be accomplished, and the world consequently be saved?

THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

A dreary place would be this earth,
Were there no little people in it;
The song of life would lose its mirth,
Were there no children to begin it:

No little forms, like buds, to grow,
And make the admiring heart surrender;
No little hands on breast and brow,
To keep the thrilling love chords tender:

No babe within our arms to leap,
No little feet toward slumber tending;
No little knee in prayer to bend,
Our lips in love the sweet words lending.

What would the mothers do for work,
Were there no pants nor jackets tearing?
No tiny dresses to embroider?
No cradle for their watchful caring?

No rosy boys at wintry morn,
With satchel to the school-house hasting;
No merry shouts as home they rush;
No precious morsel for their tasting?

Tall, grave, grown people at the door,
Tall, grave, grown people at the table;
The men on business all intent,
The dames lugubrious as they're able.

The sterner souls would get more stern,
Unfeeling natures more inhuman,
And man to stoic coldness turn,
And woman would be less than woman.

For in that land towards which we reach
Through time's mysterious, dim unfolding,
The little ones with cherub smile
Are still our Father's face beholding.

So said his voice in whom we trust,
When in Judea's realm a preacher;
He made a child confront the proud,
And be in simple guise their teacher.

Life's song, indeed, would lose its charm,
Were there no babies to begin it;
A doleful place this world would be,
Were there no little people in it.

THEOLOGY AND RELIGION.

For some time past we have been both surprised and grieved to hear men among us declaim against theological teaching, and speak scornfully of theology as a thing unworthy of any attention; while what they called religion should alone engross our thought and life. Now what is theology? and what is religion? If we can answer those two questions, we shall then see the equal importance of both subjects.

But, in the first place, let us call attention to a movement got up a few years ago to teach the people the art of "true secularism" without the Christian religion,—a movement which proved as entirely delusive as any system of navigation would be without astronomical knowledge. And all the talk among us at present about religion without theology is equally as shallow and deceptive as that of secularism without religion was. A secularism without religion ends in ruin; and a religion without theology is a baseless expediency and vain dream.

Theology is the knowledge of God, and the very first steps of religious life have to be taken through this portal. The first table of the Law was theological—it treated of God. The first commandment of Christ is theological—there is One God. It is life eternal, said Christ, to know the true God. In reading the Old and New Testament, we continually find theology—the knowledge of God, that which teaches the existence, character and attributes of the Divine Being, His laws, government and perfections—among the first commandments. We believe all human excellency and permanent happiness is derived from the study of the Divine character,—that godliness, god-likeness and religion are synonymous terms,—and to think of attaining to this religious character without theology is an idle dream. We are strongly persuaded that a religion without theology, that is, without a knowledge of God, is as impracticable as an art without a science. We may call theology the science of God, or a good life; religion the art. We do not deny but that too many have contented themselves with the study of religion, become very good theologians, without the practical application of their knowledge. So it is in every branch of useful knowledge; there are many who are students and nothing more; but this fact can never be fairly urged against any useful science. The science must precede the art as cause precedes effect. And theology is the forerunner of all true religion. We love God when we have learned He is worthy of our love; and the knowledge and love of God are the first table of the Christian Lawgiver, the love of man the second commandment of the law.

To all this it may be said that no one objects to the study of the existence and perfections of God as set forth in the Scriptures and in nature. Then we add, that no one objects to the study of theology, and no one should talk or write against theological teaching and preaching. But if it be said that there are many false speculations current concerning the being of God, we rejoin that the work of the theologian is to refute those falsities openly and candidly, for nothing on earth has produced more mischief and misery than false views of God and His government of the world. In the present age, while the conflict between truth and error goes on, and we esteem our views the best, we must set them forth in language that cannot be mistaken, and fear no frown of the dissident from our views. At such a time as this, the promulgation of our theological views as Unitarians becomes a solemn and paramount religious duty. The religion of Christ and the first apostles consisted in the faithful performance of this duty. Their continual efforts were directed to make men holy and happy, and the only instrument they used was that superior knowledge of God and His laws they possessed. A true theology is the basis on which we stand to enlighten and bless our race. No temporary expedient or human maxim or policy can equal the "knowledge of God" for direction and power in the race of life, or the final purity and peace of all mankind.

It cannot for a moment be questioned but that those false views of John Calvin, the theology of Calvinism, that have so disfigured the Protestant religion, and made many of the most harsh and intolerant bigots of Christendom, are all consistent enough with their views of God. They have presented God to the popular

mind as an angry and capricious tyrant, fixed in the purpose of damning all mankind but themselves. Is it a small thing in a man's life, the views he entertains of the Divine Being? We venture to say by far the most important fact of a man's life is the conclusion he comes to regarding the nature of God. The one excellency of the Jewish religion above all the religions of ancient times was this—the ONENESS OF GOD. And the truth of all other truths of transcendent importance in the Christian religion is, the LOVE OF GOD. These two truths are all-sufficient and of immense importance to the virtue and happiness of the world; these truths form the centre of our theology and the foundation of our religious character.

Once more, we repeat that it is a serious delusion of any class of men to hope for a truthful and permanent system of religion without "the knowledge of God." Secularism without religion, or moral principle and immortal hope, is worse than an idle dream; and a religion without a theology, or a knowledge of God, is a baseless temple, which will fall on the heads of those who have attempted to raise it.

TOWN AND COUNTRY, OR THE SAME STARS ABOVE.

"WE may take our farewell," said the father to his little child, "of those beautiful country scenes. In the course of a few days we shall find ourselves almost buried among the buildings of a great city. These green hedges and pretty lawns will be changed for streets and alleys and immense blocks of houses, far larger than anything you have ever seen."

The little one looked almost incredulous about the change, and then assumed an air of sadness at the thought of breaking with so much that was fresh and beautiful around her. A little child is a lover of nature. The taint and corruption, the buzz and stir, of city and fashionable life have no charms that vie with the hedge-rows and daisies in her mind. We have known the child of a husbandman caress a stalk of corn and weep to see a blade of grass. But to our tale.

"Father," said the little one, "shall we not hear the songs of birds in the great town?"

"Seldom the chirp of a bird, my dear."

There was one question proposed and answered to our delight. That same evening, looking up to the clear blue sky, all beautiful with stars, the little girl said, "Shall we see no more stars when we have removed to the great town of which you speak?"

"I am glad," said the father, "to say we shall see those flowers of God, daisies of the heavens, in the great town whither we are going. Those stars that blossom in the sky are seen in every place of our country and in all our towns."

"The same stars which we see?" said the little one.

"Yes, my daughter," said the father; "the same sun, the same moon, and the same stars, are seen everywhere over our land. They are so far above our heads, they shine with equal lustre over thousands of miles, and upon tens of millions of people."

There was joy in her little heart, there was cheer in her little face, and the wonted ring of happiness in her little voice, that we should have the same beautiful stars and silvery moon and benignant sun in the town as in the country.

Her joy was suggestive to our mind of a still larger thought and a deeper pleasure. All the lower objects of sight are relatively local and transient from this very cause,—they are of and near to the earth; proportionately as the object of our joy is exalted above the earth and heavenly, more widely is it seen, felt and joy-giving. We have our different local scenery, but the same stars are above us. We have our different and varied seasons, but the same sun. In the universe there are various systems of worlds, but the same God. The inhabitants of yon distant planets that revolve around the stars of Arcturus or Orion have the same God, are the issue of the same spirit, and the objects of the same tender mercy, as we who people this globe. Delightful thought, that to whatever distance we may be removed on this earth, the same light of heaven beams upon us from one common sun; and to whatever distant star we may be borne in the future and in coming ages,

the same God and Father of all, who is *above all*, will continue to bless us and do us good!

THE WAY TO SPEAK TO BOYS.

Many years ago, a certain minister was going one Sunday morning from his house to his school-room. He walked through a number of streets, and as he turned a corner he saw assembled around a pump a party of little boys, who were playing at marbles. On seeing him approach, they began to pick up their marbles and run away as fast as they could. One little fellow, not having seen him as soon as the rest, could not accomplish this so soon; and before he had succeeded in gathering up his marbles, the minister had closed upon him, and placed his hand upon his shoulder. They were face to face, the minister of God and the poor little ragged boy who had been caught in the act of playing marbles on Sunday morning. And how did the minister deal with the boy?—for that is what I want you to observe.

He might have said to the boy, "What are you doing here? You are breaking the Sabbath! Don't you deserve to be punished for breaking the command of God?"

But he did nothing of the kind. He simply said, "Have you found all your marbles?"

"No," said the little boy, "I have not."

"Then," said the minister, "I will help you to find them." Whereupon he knelt down and helped look for the marbles, and as he did so he remarked, "I liked to play at marbles when a little boy very much, and I think I can beat you. But," added he, "I never played marbles on Sunday."

The little boy's attention was arrested. He liked his friend's face, and began to wonder who he was. Then the minister said,

"I am going to a place where I think you would like to be—will you come with me?"

Said the boy, "Where do you live?"

"Why, in such and such place," was the reply.

"Why, that is the minister's house!" exclaimed the boy, as if he did not suppose that a kind man and the minister of the gospel could be the same person.

"Why," said the man, "I am the minister myself, and if you will come with me, I think I can do you some good."

Said the boy, "My hands are dirty; I cannot go."

Said the minister, "Here is a pump—why not wash?"

Said the boy, "I am so little that I can't wash and pump at the same time."

Said the minister, "If you'll wash, "I'll pump."

He at once set to work, and pumped, and pumped, and pumped; and as he pumped, the little boy washed his hands and his face till they were quite clean.

Said the boy, "My hands are wringing wet, and I don't know how to dry them."

The minister pulled out of his pocket a clean pocket-handkerchief, and offered it to the boy.

Said the little boy, "But it is clean."

"Yes," was the reply, "but it was made to be dirtied."

The little boy dried his hands and face with the handkerchief, and then accompanied the minister to the door of the Sunday-school.

Twenty years after, the minister was walking in the street of a large city, when a tall gentleman tapped him on the shoulder, and looking into his face said, "You don't remember me?"

"No," said the minister, "I don't."

"Do you remember, twenty years ago, finding a little boy playing marbles round a pump? Do you remember that boy's being too dirty to go to school, and your pumping for him, and your speaking kindly to him, and taking him to school?"

"Oh!" said the minister, "I do remember."

"Sir," said the gentleman, "I was that boy. I rose in business, and became a leading man. I have attained a good position in society; and on seeing you to-day in the street, I felt bound to come to you, and say that it is to your kindness and wisdom and Christian discretion—to your having dealt with me aggressively, that I owe, under God, all that I have attained, and all that I am at the present day."

MEN TO BE HONOURED.

Two men I honour, and no third. First, the toil-worn craftsman, that, with earth-made implement, laboriously conquers the earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard hand—crooked, coarse—wherein, notwithstanding, lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the sceptre of this planet. Venerable, too, is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence! for it is the face of a man living manlike. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed. Thou wert our conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee, too, lay a God-created form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of labour; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on; *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

A second man I honour, and still more highly; him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of life. Is not he too in his duty; endeavouring toward inward harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low? Highest of all when his outward and his inward behaviour are one; when we can name him artist; not earthly craftsman only, but inspired thinker, that with heaven-made implement conquers heaven for us. If the poor and humble toil that we have food, must not the high and glorious toil for him, in return, that he have light and guidance, freedom, immortality? These two, in all their degrees, I honour; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.

Unspeakably touching is it, however, when I find both dignities united; and he that must toil outwardly for the lowest of man's wants, is also toiling inwardly for the highest. Sublimer in this world know I nothing than a peasant saint, could such now anywhere be met with. Such a one will take thee back to Nazareth itself; thou wilt see the splendour of heaven spring forth from the humblest depths of earth, like a light shining in great darkness. It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor. We must all toil or steal (howsoever we name our stealing), which is worse. No faithful workman finds his task a pastime. The poor is hungry and athirst; but for him also there is food and drink; he is heavy-laden and weary, but for him also the heavens send sleep, and of the deepest. In his smoky cribs, a clear dewy heaven of rest envelops him, and fitful glitterings of cloud-skirted dreams. But what I do mourn over is that the lamp of his soul should go out; that no ray of heavenly or even of earthly knowledge should visit him; but only, in the haggard darkness, like to spectres, Fear and Indignation. Alas! while the body stands so broad and brawny, must the soul lie blinded, dwarfed, stupefied, almost annihilated? Alas! was this too a breath of God; bestowed in heaven, but on earth never to be unfolded? That there should one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy, were it to happen more than twenty times in the minute, as by some computations it does.—*Carlyle.*

A DOMESTIC SCENE.

A YOUNG couple had passed the first few weeks of their marriage at the house of a friend. Having at length occupied their new home, they were taking their first breakfast, when the following scene took place:

The young husband was innocently opening a boiled egg in an egg-cup. The bride observed that he was breaking the shell at what she thought the wrong end.

"How strange it looks," said she, "to see you break your egg at the small end, my dear. No one else does; and it looks so odd."

"O, I think it is quite as good—in fact better than breaking it at the large end, my love; for when you break the large end, the egg runs over the top," replied the husband.

"But it looks very odd when no one else does so," rejoined the wife.

"Well, now, I really do think it is not a nice way you have got of eating an egg. That dipping strips of bread and butter into an egg certainly is not tidy. But I do not object to your doing as you please, if you will let me break my egg at the small end," retorted the husband.

"I am sure my way is not quite as bad as eating fruit pie with a knife as you do, instead of using a fork; and you always eat the syrup as if you were not accustomed to have such things. You really do not see how very bad it looks, or I am sure you would not do so," added the wife.

"The syrup is made to be eaten with the pie, and why should I send it away on the plate?" asked the husband.

"No well-bred persons ever clear their plates as if they were starved," said the bride, with a contemptuous cast of her head.

"Well, then I am not a well-bred person," replied the husband, angrily.

"But you must be, if we are to live comfortably together," was the sharp answer of the fastidious lady.

"Well, I must break my egg at the small end, so it does not signify; and I must also eat the syrup."

"Then I will not have either fruit pie or eggs at the table."

"But I will have them," petulantly exclaimed the husband.

"Then I wish I had not been married to you," cried the young wife, bursting into tears.

"And so do I," added the now incensed husband, as he arose and walked out of the room.

This domestic quarrel was followed by others equally trifling in origin, and disgraceful in their character, until the silly couple

made themselves so disagreeable to each other that their home became unendurable, and they separated.

THE ATONEMENT, AS POPULARLY REPRESENTED.

WHAT IS IT, AND WHAT ARE ITS ISSUES?

By George Lucas.

The commonly received doctrine of the Atonement stands thus—

Jesus Christ, the Son of God—who was *himself* absolute Deity—suffered an infinite degree of punishment, which was inflicted upon him by his own Father, the First person, or distinction, in the Trinity—being the eternal Deity. This punishment was voluntarily sustained by the Second person of the Trinity, in order to render it possible for the First to extend mercy to the delinquents who inhabit our planet.

The transaction of the Atonement is represented as having followed upon the transgression of the first human pair—an event by which all the races of men, throughout all time, became involved in depravity and guilt, in the regard of the Governor of the universe; and without such infinite substitutionary suffering, it could not have been possible for man to find peace with his Maker. The arrangement which is thus understood to have taken place between the First and the Second persons, or distinctions, of the Trinity, is designated—"*The plan of Salvation.*"

If this really is *the method* by which the Deity has determined to impart His moral favours to the human family, it would become us to accept it with all thankfulness and reverence; but if, on examination, this "plan of Salvation" evidently discloses such consequences, as render it *extremely doubtful* that it can be in harmony with the character of the moral Governor of the universe, then it becomes us to pause, and distinctly weigh the difficulties it presents. This is not only a course which is fairly open to sincere minds; it becomes, to them, a pressing religious duty, which their very religiousness requires them to discharge.

We take our stand upon this conclusion, that any "plan of Salvation" which has God for its origin, must be in *entire harmony* with His character and attributes:—it *cannot* involve *principles* which are clearly at variance with the moral nature of Deity Himself! Let us inquire if the doctrine of the Atonement, as usually received, be in unison with a *reasonable* view of the Divine attributes and the Divine government.

To us it appears:—

1. *The popular doctrine of the Atonement obscures the Divine perfections.* It represents the *First* person of the Trinity as *unwilling*, or *unable*, to pardon His children who had offended Him. He *could* punish, even with *eternal torment;* but He *could not*, or *would not*, pardon a single transgressor. Why not? Because His infinite justice rendered such an event impossible! Well, be it so. It is demanded that the *Second* person of the Trinity is possessed of *all* the attributes of Deity—not less, not more. Then, was not the Second person of the Trinity infinitely just also? If the attribute of justice rendered it impossible for the First person of the Trinity to extend mercy to guilty creatures, it would prove *equally a barrier* to the extension of mercy by the Second person of the Trinity—*both* being one in *nature*, *both* would of necessity be *one* in *disposition*, and one in *action*. Was the Father infinitely just—so was the Son! If for *that cause* the Father could not extend mercy, for that *same cause* the Son could not extend mercy!

The popular theology claims that the *Second* person of the Trinity rendered it possible for the *First* to forgive the guilty, by virtue of his infinite goodness and love; or, in consequence of his vicarious sacrifice. But it must be brought into view that the Father was *Himself infinitely* good; and His love was equally without limit as that of the Son; and therefore there could be no attribute, or affection in the *Second* person of the Trinity which was absent from the *First*. If, then, a disposition to pardon the guilty existed in the Second person, it could not but equally exist in the First.

The idea that any transaction might arise, by virtue of the Second person of the Trinity, which could have the effect of altering the relationship, to the human race, of the First person of the Trinity, if admitted, would prove fatal to the perfections of the Deity Himself! Such a view would place before us the infinite Father in a less lovely aspect than we regard the Son. And that is exactly the impression which this substitutionary doctrine leaves upon the human mind. The Father becomes to us, in *effect*, the source of wrath; while the Son is recognized as the source of love! Any doctrine which necessarily leads to such consequences must be false.

2. *The scriptural representation of God—in connection with other perfections of His nature—is, that He is merciful and forgiving.* But the doctrine of the Atonement, as popularly taught, places the Deity before us as a Being who knows *no* mercy—who *cannot* forgive! When man *originally* transgressed, God did not offer forgiveness—He demanded *rectitude* on the part of His creatures; failing that, in its stead, a full measure of substitution or satisfaction. I rob my father, and he refuses to pardon me; but my elder brother, by agreement, pays the demand *in full*. Now my father steps forward, and having accepted the vicarious offering, he *generously* proposes to pardon me! But is this pardon? Nay, it is *price!* Pardon was solicited, but it was denied; and now that my demerit has been met, by contract—a *perfect satisfaction and substitution*—all such words as "forgiveness," "grace," "infinite love," "spontaneous mercy," are for ever out of place.

It cannot be that this is the kind of forgiveness which God has commended to human

parents! It is *pay or perish!* Alas! for this doctrine. It renders the character of God so unlovely, that we could call Him *Father no more*, did we receive it. If true, it would follow that God *never forgave one sinner* since the world stood! That He never *will*—never *can* forgive one! If a poor child of His transgress the law, what must follow? Vengeance, vengeance, or satisfaction! When I pardon my child, do I demand satisfaction or substitution? *No!* Nor would a *right-minded* parent *permit* his forgiving act to be rendered *despicable*, by accepting *price* as its condition, were it offered! How much more spontaneous, lovely, glorious, is the forgiving heart which for ever dwells in the infinite Deity! No, it cannot be!—away with such teaching! When God pardons, He does it for His *own name's sake—because* He is the infinitely *just* and holy. He knew our frame—foresaw our condition—determined to pardon the transgressor on his return to obedience—not exacting more from man than he could bear. Here we see justice and mercy harmonize—God was merciful *because* He was just. His mercy was the *spontaneous* out-growing of His *justice!*

3. *The doctrine of the Atonement, as generally received, ignores Divine justice.* It is affirmed that the penalty due to sin is *infinite—infinite* because directed against the infinite love of God; and being so, the finally impenitent sinner will be consigned to eternal life in *conscious* misery. But if the infinite satisfaction view is correct, surely it *cannot* be that eternal torment awaits the lost. Does the Deity demand *double* payment? Has not perfect satisfaction been rendered *already*, in the sufferings of Jesus; and is it even so that not one fraction of the debt is really discharged? Is it punishment—infinite torment still? Had no price been paid—no substitute accepted, the penalty due to sin could not have been more than this! *Surely* this is not infinite justice—*it cannot be!*

God is just! Then could it be an act of justice to regard the sins of a weak, depraved creature as an *infinite* crime? Is it even possible that a just God could doom a poor worm of earth to endure a penalty of infinite magnitude? Is it conceivable how, *in any sense, justice could be administered* by a being who had proposed to torment a finite creature so long as Deity Himself shall endure? But all this is involved in the theory of Atonement as popularly held. It strikes at the foundation of the *justice*, as *surely* as it obliterates the mercy, of the Governor of the universe.

God is just! But could it be an act of justice to punish one who was perfectly innocent, for the *crimes* of the guilty? Could the infinitely just God recognize an administration based on no *principle* of justice whatever, but clearly *fatal* to all *moral* equity? Must not the heavens fall, and man perish from the earth, rather than the righteous Governor of the universe could smite, with infinite wrath, one who was as innocent as Himself? To what condition would the execution of law, in any country be reduced, were the practice of punishing innocent persons for the crimes of the guilty admitted? It would be a policy destitute alike of justice or wisdom for its basis, and must involve all concerned therein in disgrace.

3. *The popular doctrine of the Atonement is self-destructive!* It regards human transgressions as infinite offences. But let us clearly understand what is implied thereby. Is *each* individual trangression of *each* sinner an infinite offence? If so, then *each* individual transgression, being infinite, could be met *only* by a separate infinite sacrifice. *One* infinite sacrifice could not cover a *multitude* of infinite offences; seeing, then, we have but *one* infinite Atonement, it would be, on this hypothesis, *infinitely defective!*

Is it a *combination* of *all* the sins of a transgressor which constitutes the *one* infinite offence? Still, *each separate* offender, being chargeable with infinite demerit, would need a *distinct*, infinite sacrifice, to meet the infinite turpitude involved in his personal transgressions.

Do the *aggregated* trespasses of *all* sinners, throughout *all time*, constitute the *one* infinite offence? Be it even so. Then what follows? This. *One* sin is not chargeable with infinite demerit; the combined transgressions of *one individual* do not constitute an infinite crime! What then becomes of that teaching which declares that *sin* in its *nature* is an offence of infinite magnitude, and dooms *each* transgressor to eternal life in conscious misery as its just consequence? Such a doctrine must be an unmitigated error!

5. *The doctrine of the Atonement, commonly accepted, is an impossibility.* The teaching amounts to this—that the penalty suffered for human transgression was infinite; and as such it could not be expiated but by the punishment of an *infinite* being. Thus, the Second person of the Trinity—being *himself* Deity—endured the penalty due to the transgressor. What does this mean? That God *suffered? Impossible!* That God punished *Himself? Impossible!* That God *expired? Impossible!* Now, if all the books in the universe—all the theologians of past and present ages—even all the angels in heaven—were to conspire to declare that a theology which clearly points to such conclusions, has God for its author, it would be the highest virtue of which a human mind is capable, to *discard* it, to execrate it, to the glory of the eternally wise, ever living and adorable Deity. Amen! "*Let God be true!*"

The popular doctrine of the Atonement bears upon its *front* the *genuine* mark of a *theological blunder*. Like all error, it *crumbles into ashes*, when we most *devoutly* wish to discover the *foundation* on which it claims to repose its *vital* strength. *This doctrine is neither in harmony with the attributes of God, nor adapted to the moral condition of man!*

If evil had never been permitted, the wisdom of God could not have appeared in overruling it, nor His justice in punishing it, nor His mercy in forgiving it, nor His power in subduing it.—*Gifford.*

DIVINE POWER AND LOVE.

WHETHER the Creator will be as good to the just and the unjust in the future immortal life as He is in this, is a question for the exercise of the brain, the emotions of the heart, and for earnest investigation. If "mercy becomes an earthly monarch more than his crown," we must believe that our Maker will retain that transcendent attribute of His nature when all subordinate potentates shall have ceased to rule, and when their bodies shall have been rendered back to dust. We think that God's goodness consists in doing just what an affectionate parent would do if it were in their power as it is in His, to reform a prodigal son by changing the current of his thoughts and actions, and vicious course into the highway of righteousness and happiness.

Lovely are the young in the morning bloom of life, and venerable is the silvery head that crowns a beautiful character "past meridian." Sacred to us are both in the picture-halls of memory. Some of us know how much we have missed the dim eye, the wrinkled face and the bowed form from the old arm-chair. Many of us are bereft of those dear ones who have cradled us in infancy, smiled upon our childish sports, and watched our adolescence to manhood and womanhood with an increased anxiety and tenderness. So does our Heavenly Father care for all who bear His image, whether it glows in angels' bosoms, or in poor forsaken wanderers neglected by their fellowmen in this life's pilgrimage.

The bright lineaments of nature seem to render thanksgiving to God for His goodness to all as significantly as if they were so many tongues of flesh singing in delightful euphonism. He has endowed us with reasonable faculties to discern in those outer emblems the inner forces of His power and love. From the fossils of fish that have once swam in ancient seas, up to the ether sea over our heads, spangled with ponderous worlds, which are so many bright registers of His everlasting loving-kindness, we have prolific objects for pleasing contemplations and gratitude. Everlasting with the King Eternal knows no end. "The apostle trusted in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, and especially of those who believe." This is a tangible truth which is not figurative, but plain and conclusive. Its wealth of meaning cannot be limited by elaborate disquisitions of the learned.

Old creeds cannot stay the ripples of confluent thoughts that are tending to broader streams of liberal Christianity. Religious philosophers who are ardently in search of divine truth will aim to secure it independent of sectarian boundaries and bigotry.

"We all do fade as a leaf." How often has this passage come home with force to our minds when we have seen showers of them falling in autumn from the trees! Then hope leaps up and paints the fresh spring germs of divinity within us, which will survive "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds."

There are none so inferior that others do not come within the sphere of their influence for good or evil, while we live, move and have our being on this earth. "How far that little candle throws its beams, so shines a good deed in a sinful world." "Power belongeth unto God," and His nature is love.

THE FOOTSTEPS OF DECAY.

[The following is a translation from an ancient Spanish poem, which, says the *Edinburgh Review*, is "surpassed by nothing with which we are acquainted in the Spanish language, except the 'Ode of Luis de Leon.'"]

O, let the soul its slumbers break,
Arouse its senses, and awake,
To see how soon
Life, in its glories, glides away,
And the stern footsteps of decay
Come stealing on.

And while we view the rolling tide
Down which our flowing minutes glide
Away so fast,
Let us the present hour employ,
And deem each future dream a joy
Already past.

Let no vain hope deceive the mind!
No happier let us hope to find
To-morrow than to-day!
Our golden dreams of yore were bright;
Like them the present shall delight—
Like them decay.

Our lives like hasting streams must be,
That into one engulphing sea
Are doomed to fall—
The sea of death, whose waves roll on
O'er king and kingdom, crown and throne,
And swallow all.

Alike the river's lordly tide,
Alike the humble rivulet's glide
To that sad wave;
Death levels poverty and pride,
And rich and poor sleep side by side
Within the grave.

Our birth is but a starting-place;
Life is the running of the race,
And death the goal.
There all our glittering toys are brought;
That path alone, of all unsought,
Is found of all.

See, then, how poor and little worth
Are all those glittering toys of earth
That lure us here—
Dreams of a sleep that death must break!
Alas! before it bids us wake,
We disappear.

Long ere the damp of death can blight,
The cheek's pure glow of red or white
Has passed away.
Youth smiled, and all was heavenly fair;
Age came and laid his finger there,
And where are they?

Where is the strength that spurned decay,
The step that roved so light and gay,
The heart's blithe tone?
The strength is gone, the step is slow,
And joy grows wearisome, and we,
When age comes on.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

A FORCIBLE ILLUSTRATION.—There is something forcible in the anecdote of a distinguished preacher, who, not being able to make any impression upon a man's understanding, wrote the name of God on a piece of white paper. "Do you see that?" asked the preacher. "Yes," replied the individual. He then covered the word by placing over it a piece of gold. "Do you see it *now?*" The effect was startling. The man saw at once what had shut his eyes to all that was true and beautiful and worthy of devotion in the world.

A QUERY.—The State does not determine our lawyer, physician or tradesman; why should it appoint our pastor? Why select for its dictation precisely the matter in which it is least competent to dictate, and in which its blunders are most injurious?—*Rev. Baptist Noel.*

WATER FOR JERUSALEM.—It is proposed by a company to construct sewers and supply water conduits in the city of Jerusalem. There are still evidences remaining that water was once had there in great abundance. The great reservoir beneath the Temple, 736 feet in circuit and 42 in depth, held two millions of gallons—and there were upwards of thirty smaller reservoirs connected with it. The Pool of Bethesda, now dry, contained 21,874,742 gallons; and the Pools of Solomon, about seven miles distant from the city, held 50,136,320.

AN ADMIRABLE RETORT.—A short time ago a clergyman of the Presbyterian school of thought met with a Mr. White, of different views on the subject of conversion. He knew Mr. W. to be a very excellent man, and declined to hold any argument with him, but begged to relate a little incident. "I knew," said the clergyman, "a very estimable, intelligent and beautiful young lady, whose moral character was above reproach, but who had never met with a change of heart. She was taken suddenly and dangerously sick, and subsequently died. Just before death, her sufferings being very great, she threw up her arms, and in a loud voice cried for mercy!" Thinking he had made a sensation, the minister waited for a reply, which, in his opinion, would probably amount to nothing. Mr. White responded, "I have somewhere read of one who was estimable, intelligent, and whose moral character was above reproach, who, dying in great agony, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" The Presbyterian friend groaned, and passed on.

THE BOY AND THE GREYHOUND.—A little boy had lived for some time with a penurious uncle. The latter was one day walking out, with the child by his side, when a friend, accompanied by a greyhound, addressed him. The little fellow, never having seen a dog of so slight and slim a texture, clasped the creature round the neck, with the impassioned cry, "Oh doggie! doggie! and do you live wi' your uncle too, that you are so thin?"

EDUCATION.—Professor Agassiz, in a late lecture, said: "Boys and girls, men and women, should be less cloistered. They should be associated in the school, on the farm and in the shop. Their influences should be pure and healthful, and thus would the race attain more perfect development. Society will then be put on a higher foundation."

TOM BROWN IN JAIL.—The Church of England seems to suffer in the colonies, as well as at home, from the lack of adequate clerical discipline. Thus the Jamaica *Tribune* tells us of a Rev. T. J. Brown—a recipient of £340 a-year out of the public funds—who, after suffering imprisonment for debt, turns the event to account by writing a book, entitled "Tom Brown in Jail," a sequel to "Tom Brown's School-days." "If," says the indignant journalist, "instead of 'Tom Brown,' as the reverend gentleman designates himself, receiving £340 per annum, it were Tom Williams or Tom Anything-else receiving £80 or £90 a-year as tide waiter, he would forthwith be dismissed from the service of the Customs, as unworthy to check the landing of a cargo of salt fish, or a cargo of white pine lumber. Is, then—we inquire with pain at the necessity for the inquiry—the service of God less to be respected than the civil service of the country?" We are reminded by this occurrence that the ecclesiastical establishment at Jamaica costs £40,000 a-year, and yet we suppose that the great majority of the inhabitants pay for their own means of worship.

HOW TO FILL A CHURCH.—On Sunday morning, at the close of the service at Chobham, several poor persons received the sum of three shillings each in consideration of their regular attendance at church during the previous year. The sum was formerly four shillings, but is diminished in consequence of the number of applications for this charity.—*West Surrey Times.*

DISPUTE ABOUT A BURIAL.—A good *bon mot* of the Grand Vizier, apropos of the clerical squabble about the burial of the late Baroutchibaschi, is told by the Levant *Herald.* It appears that the defeated "Catholic" party urged their right, in the last resort, before his Highness, affirming that they held conclusive proofs of the deceased functionary having died a member of their communion. "Well, then," said Faud Pacha, "since you are thus sure of his soul, you can, I think, afford to leave the others his body;" an award which will bear no indifferent comparison with the famous judgment of Solomon.

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